



BPD AWARENESS ACT

ABN: 29 598 718 729

NATALIE MALCOLMSON

Phone: 0415 111 894

EMAIL: bpdawarenessact@gmail.com

BPD AWARENESS ACT DBT SKILLS GROUP PROGRAM INFORMATION



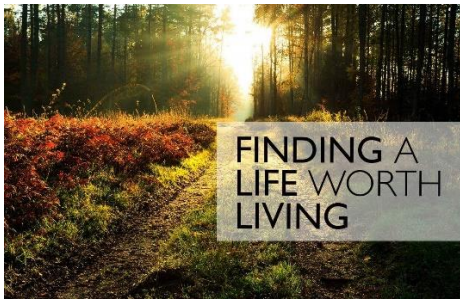
BPD Awareness ACT provides a Dialectical Behaviour Skills Group Program. Our program is not a therapy program but rather a psychoeducational capacity building program based on the DBT Skills component of DBT therapy programs. The program is designed to build your capacity to learn skills that help you to self-regulate your emotions, tolerate distress without making things worse and improve interpersonal relationships.

Our DBT skills groups are a great way to learn, study, practice, and review the skills and concepts from DBT in a supportive, non-judgmental environment. Our DBT skills groups are based on a Mentor/Peer model rather a therapeutic model and our facilitator and co-facilitators have all undertaken training in teaching DBT Skills. The program is highly structured and includes modules dedicated to learning mindfulness, distress tolerance, emotion regulation, and interpersonal effectiveness. The modules are outlined in more depth below.

Our DBT skills group program is delivered in groups for 2.5 hours per week and you can attend in person at our office in Spence or online via Zoom, whichever way is more effective for you to learn. We have three groups operating, your choices are Tuesday or Wednesday's 5.30-8pm and Thursday's 11am-1.30pm. The full program consists of four x 10-week terms (follows ACT school terms). You will get handouts and practice exercises each week that will form a manual for you to keep. We know that being in a group can be scary and overwhelming, so we make sure you feel as comfortable as you can while in group. We run the program as an ongoing program with one module covered per term on a rotating basis during the year. You can join the group, dependent on availability, at the beginning of any of the 10-week terms. You are welcome to continue to repeat modules as often as you wish, to learn the emotional regulation skills well to meet your goals.



We aim to make our DBT Skills Groups affordable to those that need them. The cost for the DBT Skills Group is \$500 per 10-week term (payment plans available). We also offer subsidise for your individual circumstances and for those on low wages and Centrelink payments. The program can also be funded under NDIS Plans. To secure a place in the program, you will need to attend an intake interview. As there is a limit on the number of participants on the program if you wish to proceed after intake, you will need to commit to the full 10-week program, and as such any missed groups will still be charged for over the 10 weeks and the full payment/payment plan must be completed.



The DBT Skills Group facilitator is Natalie Malcolmson. Natalie is a BPD Advocate, Mentor and Peer Educator and is comprehensively trained in DBT (training 90 hours over 12-month period) and was lucky to undertake her training in Australia with NEA BPD Australia with Professor Alan Fruzzetti (Harvard University USA) and completed her training in June 2017. She has been running the program since 2018. Prior to this she worked with a registered psychologist co-facilitating a DBT informed program for 2 years. She is also a trained Family Connections Leader and has facilitated support groups for loved ones of those with BPD in Canberra since 2016. Natalie has lived experience as her husband of 22 years, Todd was diagnosed with BPD in 2015. She was awarded the ACT 2018 Mental Health Carer of the Year and the Westfield Belconnen Local Hero Award 2019.

As well as Natalie leading the groups, we also have Peer Leaders in each group who all have lived experience with BPD and DBT. They have successfully completed our program and remain in group as Peer Leaders to support those in group and they are evidence that Dialectical Behaviour Skills really do help people change and grow and achieve things they never thought were possible. Peer Leaders are trained in how to teach DBT skills and they can help you with homework and answer questions you may have on learning and using the skills. They will also help you to ground yourself if you become overwhelmed in group.



WHAT SKILLS WILL I LEARN?

In our Emotional Living Skills Groups, you will learn skills from all four modules of DBT skills - Mindfulness, Distress Tolerance, Emotion Regulation, and Interpersonal Effectiveness, as well as several other helpful emotional regulation skills. You can repeat each module until you feel you have a good working knowledge of the emotional regulation skills. Some participants complete one full four term round whilst others may continue the program for multiple rounds.

Our Emotional Living Skills Group Program modules in 2022 /23 will be delivered as follows:

TERM	DATES: STARTS WEEK OF	GROUP	SKILLS MODULE
1-2023	30 th January to 3 rd April	TUE	WALKING THE MIDDLE PATH
		WED&THUR	DISTRESS TOLERANCE
2-2023	1 st May to 3 rd July	TUE	DISTRESS TOLERANCE
		WED&THUR	EMOTION REGULATION
3-2023	26 th June to 18 th September	TUE	EMOTION REGULATION
		WED&THUR	INTERPERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS
4-2023	9 th October to 11 th December	TUE	WALKING THE MIDDLE PATH
		WED&THUR	INTERPERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Note: The DBT Mindfulness skills are taught at the beginning of each module.

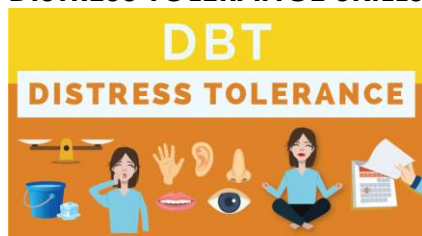
EMOTIONAL LIVING SKILLS MODULES

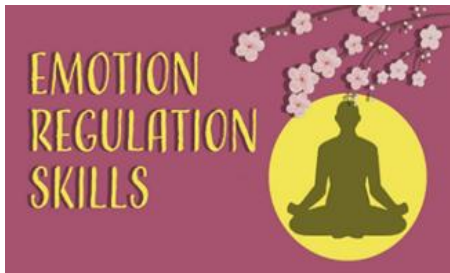
The emotion regulation skills taught in our program are divided into four Modules which are: mindfulness, emotional regulation, distress tolerance and interpersonal effectiveness.

MINDFULNESS: These skills focus on training your mind to attend and focus on the present moment rather than getting caught up in past and/or future concerns. Mindfulness skills help you to balance the emotional with the logical/factual state of mind and allow you to access your inner wisdom. Many people with emotional dysregulation react impulsively to emotions and can feel under 'emotional duress'. Mindfulness is a core component of emotion regulation skills as mindfulness helps you to become more aware of your state of mind and you can learn how to respond to emotions based on your 'Wise Mind'. The skills introduced will demystify mindfulness by breaking the process down into steps that can be practiced. Mindfulness skills can help you to experience the present moment and overcome habitual, negative judgements about yourself.



DISTRESS TOLERANCE SKILLS: These skills help you get through the difficult life challenges as skilfully as possible without making the situation worse. The distress tolerance module includes crisis survival skills (including distraction and self-soothing techniques) and other skills to help increase your ability to accept both yourself and the current situation in a non-judgemental way when it cannot be resolved quickly. The distress tolerance module is focused on developing practical emotional crisis survival skills. These set of skills help you to reduce your reliance on problematic ways of coping with intense emotions. Distress tolerance skills are essential to overcome behaviours associated with distress intolerance and impulsivity, such as substance use, disordered eating, and self-harm.





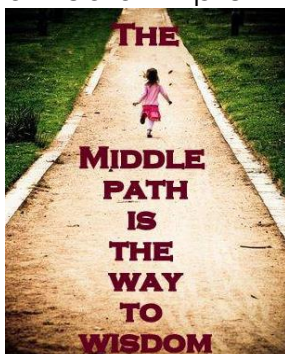
EMOTIONAL REGULATION SKILLS: These skills improve your understanding and awareness of emotions. They aim to decrease your emotional vulnerability and suffering and increase your ability to regulate your emotions. This module teaches you how to tolerate, as well as change, distressing emotions and ways to

increase your positive emotions. Emotion regulation is at the heart of the program. This module begins with developing an in-depth understanding of emotions, which is a prerequisite for learning to regulate your emotions. The module includes skills that can become powerful tools to modulate the intensity of emotions. The skills introduced also help you to reduce your vulnerability to emotional dysregulation by building up positive experiences and attending to health issues.

INTERPERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS: These skills teach you ways to achieve your goals in interpersonal situations, increasing your ability to obtain and maintain fulfilling relationships and improving and maintaining your self-respect. Interpersonal effectiveness skills are focused



on developing skills to express feelings and needs, set limits, negotiate solutions, and validate the feelings of others. This module of the program is specifically aimed at improving relationships and respecting personal values and beliefs.



WALKING THE MIDDLE PATH: The middle path is about balance. It is an alternative to black-and-white thinking and polarization, both of which are particularly common among people with emotion regulation issues, but which everyone is prone to from time to time. In this module we learn skills to manage dialectics, how to validate and self-validate and positive behavioural change strategies.

The DBT Skills Group Program will assist individuals who suffer from emotional dysregulation, despite their diagnosis. A mental health diagnosis is not required to attend our groups. DBT Skills have been shown by research to improve an individual's quality of life when they are having difficulties regulating their emotions, tolerating distress, and managing interpersonal relationships. The skills in our program will help you learn effective and helpful coping skills so that you are no longer engaging in unhelpful and/or risky coping behaviours.

If you require any further information, have any questions, or would like to register for our DBT Skills Group Program please do not hesitate to contact **Natalie Malcolmson at BPD Awareness ACT on 0415 111 894** or via email - bpdawarenessact@gmail.com